

The American Observer

A free, virtuous, and enlightened people must know well the great principles and causes on which their happiness depends.—James Monroe

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Britain Faces Hard Situation

Recent Elections Leave Parliament in Unstable Position at Critical Time

A FEW days ago 12 guards from the Tower of London trudged through the British House of Commons. Wearing costumes of the 17th century and carrying flickering lanterns, they descended into the basement and investigated the furnace rooms and coal bins. If they had been asked what they were doing, they would have replied they were looking for hidden kegs of gunpowder.

Of course, no one seriously thought that gunpowder would be found in the basement of today's Parliament building. The "search" is merely a picturesque ceremony that always accompanies the opening of a new Parliament. The custom dates back more than 300 years to the time when James I was King.

In 1605 Guy Fawkes, a young Englishman, plotted to blow up the old House of Parliament. In the cellar he concealed 20 kegs of gunpowder to be touched off when the lawmakers had assembled. The authorities got wind of the plot, and Fawkes was seized before he could carry it out.

It was decided, though, that the meeting place of Parliament should henceforth always be searched on the day when the lawmakers were scheduled to convene. Thus it was that the quaint ceremony was carried out again recently just before Britain's newly elected Parliament met for the first time.

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POLITICS CAN BE VERY CONFUSING when quite a few members of the Republican and Democratic parties refuse to accept their leaders' programs and vote with their opponents on numerous issues.

Disagreement Within Parties

Both the Republicans and the Democrats Have So-called "Liberal" and "Conservative" Wings that Differ in Their Views on National Policies

WHEN a person today says, "I am a Republican," or "I am a Democrat," he has not gone far toward describing his political views. Within both major parties there are serious disagreements over some of the principal issues that our government faces. Each has a so-called "liberal" and "conservative" wing. (Those members of both parties who favor a less active government are usually referred to as "conservatives." The Democrats and Republicans who believe the government should continue most of its present activities are generally called "liberals.")

In 1948, it will be remembered, the Democrats were so divided that a number of party leaders in the South re-

fused to support President Truman's candidacy. Instead they nominated and supported a separate candidate, who received all the electoral votes of four southern states.

The chief issue which split the Democrats during the 1948 campaign was that of civil rights. President Truman had taken the position that the federal government should adopt laws forbidding certain types of discrimination against Negroes and other minority groups. His view was opposed by many southerners who felt that legislation on the race question should be left to the states. This controversy is still going on, and no one is able to predict how it will affect the next Presidential election.

It is not only on the civil rights issue, however, that the Democrats are split. They are quarreling over the whole broad question of how large a part the federal government should play in guiding and controlling the nation's social and economic life.

President Truman has been vigorously promoting a program which he calls the "Fair Deal." It includes his civil rights proposals, enlargement of the social security system, compulsory national health insurance, federal financial aid for schools, measures to protect farmers against low agricultural prices, and federal spending to promote the building of homes for low-income and middle-income families.

In short, President Truman feels that the federal government should be very active—and spend large sums of money—in its efforts to improve the day-to-day living conditions of the people. "What good is a government," Mr. Truman's supporters ask, "if it does not look after the people's welfare?"

The Fair Deal program, says President Truman, "will make our citizens economically secure, well-educated, and confident of the future. Only in a nation of such citizens can free enterprise grow and expand and reach its full possibilities. The program . . . is aimed to promote the prosperity and welfare of the American people. It is aimed to increase the freedom of the American people."

Not only do many Republicans oppose much of this program, but so do quite a few members of the President's own party. Noteworthy among the Democratic critics is James F. Byrnes, of South Carolina. Mr. Byrnes, a lifelong Democrat, has served in the U. S. House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Supreme Court. He handled special wartime jobs for

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Walter E. Myer

ing? I have heard that question discussed many times, but I have never heard it convincingly answered.

The fact is, of course, that one is at a disadvantage in either case. It is far better that one should be realistic in sizing himself up; that he should know about where he stands and where he rates, and that he avoid the extremes of undue humility on the one hand and conceit on the other.

There are many people who are intelligent, but who do not think well enough of themselves. They feel inferior. They scarcely expect to succeed, or to do anything as well as other people do.

Such individuals are not diseased mentally. They are not abnormal. But, either because of a natural timidity, or because of some phase of early training

or environment, they have not developed self-confidence. Unless they overcome the tendency to underrate themselves, they are likely never to realize their possibilities. They do not strive for really first-rate achievements. They stand back when opportunity knocks at their doors. They are satisfied with mediocre positions in life.

There are many, of course, who err on the side of overconfidence. They are egotistical. They think too highly of themselves. They may get on fairly well, at least at the start, for they are always pushing themselves forward; always seizing every opportunity for advancement.

These individuals, however, being easily satisfied with their efforts, and not being able to judge their abilities, are likely to be superficial and to tackle jobs which they cannot finish; to undertake work which they are not prepared in training or will power to handle successfully. Furthermore, they are likely to be unpopular.

Each person should understand that

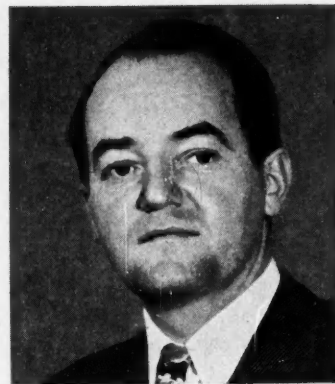
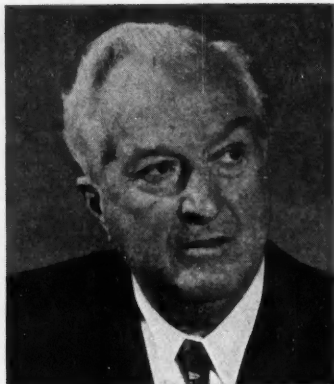
his own estimation of himself may be far from the truth. He should sit down calmly and think things over; should try honestly to compare his abilities and achievements with those of his friends. At times, it is wise for a young person to talk over his strong and weak points with his parents, teachers, and companions.

But it is not enough for one to talk about his mental qualities. He must act. For example, the person who lacks confidence should, by force of will, take on a hard job. He should work at it untiringly, putting all his energy into the enterprise. He is very likely to accomplish something through his hard and well-directed work. This victory will give him added confidence, and the inferiority complex may soon lose its hold.

A balanced personality is the goal toward which one should strive. Avoid vanity, but develop a justified self-confidence. Conquer either timidity or egotism, whichever the case may be. Avoid overconfidence, but do not stand back when things are to be done.

Shun Vanity, but Don't Be Timid

By Walter E. Myer



THE DIVIDED DEMOCRATS (left to right): Senators Byrd of Virginia and McCarran of Nevada are two Democrats who oppose a number of points in President Truman's program. Senators Lucas of Illinois and Humphrey of Minnesota are strong supporters of the Truman Fair Deal proposals.

Party Views

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President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and later served as Secretary of State under President Truman.

At present, though, Byrnes is campaigning for the governorship of his state, and he is making a slashing attack upon the ideas which underlie President Truman's Fair Deal proposals. It seems likely that Truman's opponents within the Democratic Party will rally around Byrnes, particularly if the former Secretary of State wins his race for governor of South Carolina.

Byrnes contends that our nation is being severely harmed by the continued expansion of federal activities, federal power, and federal expenditures. "Too many people," he says, "want to lean upon the government, forgetting that the government must lean upon the people. Too many people are thinking of security instead of opportunity. . . . We are threatened with the concentration in Washington of the powers of local governments, including the police powers, and with the imposition of creeping, but ever advancing socialistic programs."

Heavy Taxes

These programs, continues Byrnes, put an excessive tax burden on everyone—even on families with relatively low incomes. The government, he declares, should allow the ordinary citizen "to keep more of the money he gets for his labor to spend as he pleases, instead of having it taken from him and sent to Washington, to let bureaucrats spend as they think it should please him."

So even though President Truman and Mr. Byrnes both call themselves Democrats, their views are very dif-

ferent. Meanwhile, there is a similar disagreement in the Republican Party.

Early last month a group of Republican leaders drafted a statement that is to serve as their party's official "platform" in the 1950 congressional elections to be held in November. But their declaration has been criticized by a number of Republicans. The statement they produced is favored mainly by the Republicans' so-called "conservative" wing.

This declaration agreed with President Truman on some points, such as extension of the social security system. However, it chiefly emphasized a desire to reduce federal spending and to check the growth of federal control over individuals and private concerns. The party leaders who drew up this statement also set forth "Liberty Against Socialism" as the Republican slogan for 1950.

Is Liberty Endangered?

In other words, many Republicans hold views that are quite similar to those of James Byrnes. They believe President Truman's proposed "welfare measures"—the compulsory health insurance plan, for instance—would be accompanied by government controls and red tape. These, it is charged, would endanger the citizens' liberties.

Alf M. Landon, who was the Republican Presidential candidate in 1936, calls the Truman program a system of "handouts." "Whenever you get a people feeding out of the hand of a government," he declares, "the next step of that government is always to fence them in."

Harold Stassen, and numerous other prominent Republicans, think the people should be given this clear-cut choice: Truman's Fair Deal measures, or a Republican program that would put its main emphasis on individual liberty and government economy.

But Thomas Dewey, Republican candidate in the last two Presidential

elections, takes a different viewpoint. He contends that the Republican Party, in order to win elections, must do more than oppose policies like those in Truman's Fair Deal program. He thinks the people want "welfare" legislation, and that the Republicans' big need is to offer a *sounder* welfare program than President Truman's.

Some Examples

Dewey insists that his party, instead of dwelling mainly upon criticism of Democratic policies, should publicize the "forward-looking policies" that have been carried out by various Republican-controlled state governments. He says that Minnesota, for instance, has "made great strides in promoting peaceful labor relations," and that Republicans in Oregon have established an outstanding program of timber conservation and replacement. "In California," Dewey continues, "a Republican administration has made social progress . . . equaled in any department by few other states."

Likewise, Governor Luther Youngdahl, of Minnesota, says the Republicans "must present a *positive* program that the people will accept" and must demonstrate that they can carry out such a program more efficiently than can the Democrats.

Most discord among the different Republican and Democratic groups is centered on national matters rather than on foreign relations. All major political groups in the nation are agreed that the United States must maintain strong military forces, and that it must seek to check the growth of Communist power abroad.

There have, however, been some heated quarrels over the best way of carrying out these broad international policies. Recent congressional disputes concerning the management of the Defense Department have not been strictly along party lines. Neither have the arguments over the Truman

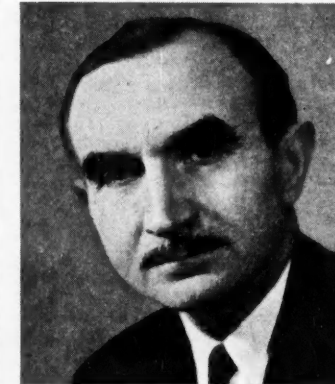
administration's policy concerning China. Toward the European Recovery Program, there is not a great deal of open opposition. Some members of each major party, however, contend that our government is spending too much money on the aid project.

The present conflict within the Democratic and Republican camps is not highly unusual. Political opinion in the United States is, in fact, seldom neatly divided along party lines. When we have only two large parties, it is practically impossible for all the people in either organization to agree closely on what policies the nation should follow. Except in extraordinary cases, though, all groups within a party generally close ranks and support the same slate of candidates at election time. The opposing groups usually work out compromises so that they can continue to work together.

The alternative to this system would be for the United States to have a comparatively large number of parties, as France has. And few Americans would want the unstable government that a "multiple party system" like that of France often produces.

There are a number of Americans, however, who think it would be a good policy for all the Democrats and Republicans who favor a less active federal government to work together in one major party, and for all the Democrats and Republicans who support Truman's ideas to unite in another party. There is no extensive movement of this kind under way at the present time, however.

Eritrea, in northeast Africa, has been the scene of fighting recently. A United Nations group is now there to learn what kind of government the Eritreans want. Differences of opinion between groups which want independence and those which want to join Ethiopia have led to riots and street battles.



THE DIVIDED REPUBLICANS (left to right): Senator Wherry of Nebraska and Representative Martin, Jr., of Massachusetts represent the "conservative" school of opinion in the Republican Party, and Senators Lodge of Massachusetts and Morse of Oregon represent the "liberal" viewpoint.

Magazines and Newspapers

"How F.D.R. Planned To Use the A-Bomb," by Nat Finney, *Look*, March 14, 1950.

During World War II, Dr. Alexander Sachs—a friend and adviser of President Roosevelt—drew up a plan on how first to employ the atomic bomb. Roosevelt expressed approval of this plan just a few months prior to his death.

Dr. Sachs proposed that the bomb be demonstrated before a group of scientists from neutral countries and from all the nations that were allied with us, and before representatives of the world's great religious faiths. Those who witnessed the demonstration were to prepare a report that would be published and broadcast to the world. Then we were to warn our enemies that the bomb would be used against certain areas unless they surrendered.

Whether Roosevelt would have carried out this proposal, had he lived until the bomb was completed, no one will ever know. It may be that F.D.R. would have discarded Sachs' plan and approved the surprise bombing of a Japanese city.

"Crime Entrenched in Politics," editorial in the *Kansas City Times*, February 17, 1950.

A genuine, all-out war on criminal gangs, spearheaded by the federal government, could win. There is no question about it. There are indications of such a drive. The President has called on federal, state, and local law enforcement officials for a "moral" crusade.

But the war on crime will require real courage on the part of political leaders at all levels of government, for the foundation of our national crime threat is an alliance between crime and politics.

Political influence, upon local governments in particular, is the key to the operation of big gambling syndicates and other crime organizations. Mobsters gain control of large blocks of deliverable votes, and represent themselves as indispensable to the group in power at the city hall.

If a drive against crime organizations and gangsters is to succeed, it will have to go all the way to the roots that are deep in politics.

"United Nations Appeal for Children—Past Record Raises Hope for New Campaigns," by Lowell W. Rooks, *United Nations Bulletin*, February 15, 1950.

Campaigns in support of the United Nations Appeal for Children are underway in six countries and will soon be launched in a number of others. In the last drive for which totals are available, 80 countries and territories responded and almost 30 million dollars were collected. Sweden made the highest total contribution of any nation, while Iceland made the highest *per capita* donation.

The funds have been used in various ways to aid needy children in 54 countries. For instance, five million European children have been fed through the fund; 10 million children in Europe and North Africa have been vaccinated against tuberculosis; and 40,000 child victims of Ecuador's recent earthquake have been aided. In Thailand, five mobile health units have been established—four to travel by car and the fifth to go by river boat to different parts of the country.

Britain is the world's largest exporter of automobiles and trucks. Last year the British sold 258,000 cars and 93,000 trucks to other countries. The United States sold 267,000 motor vehicles of all types to nations abroad.



OUR COURTS need the best judges possible

Local and State Affairs

Selecting Your Judges

INDEPENDENT judges, one writer has said, are the basis of our American judicial system. Yet, our states have long been faced with the problem of finding a way to select judges so that their jobs will not be influenced by political tides. Some states have thought it best to have judges appointed by the governor. Others have provided that the members of the "bench" be selected by the state legislatures. A third group has thought that judges, like other officials, should be elected by direct vote of the people.

Ten years ago, Missouri worked out a fourth plan for selecting its judiciary—and today people of the state feel that experience has shown their system to be effective. On three occasions since the plan was adopted, the voters have approved it at the polls. In general, the system has speeded the work of the judiciary and it is said to "have taken the courts out of politics."

Under Missouri's plan, the job of finding a new judge starts with what is called a "selection commission." Actually, there are several commissions, each dealing with different courts. One, for instance, covers the state Supreme Court and the three Courts of Appeals. Others consider nominations for lower courts.

The commissions themselves are chosen so that the members will not represent one viewpoint or one party. The governor appoints some members, and practicing lawyers vote on the rest. While they are serving, the commissioners cannot hold public office, and they cannot hold an official position in any political party. The members are chosen so that they represent different parts of the state. They receive no pay for this work.

Whenever a vacancy occurs in one of the courts covered by the plan, lawyers or other interested persons can write to the commission and recommend individuals to fill the post. The commission that handles the particular court goes over the qualifications of the persons suggested, and decides upon the three "candidates" it thinks are best. It then sends its list of three to the governor. The governor, in turn, appoints one of the three to fill the vacancy.

But this does not end the process. A year or so after the appointment is made, at one of the state's regular elections, the people vote to decide whether or not the judge should be kept in office for a full term. Then at the end of each of his terms, the judge again goes before the people for approval at the ballot box.

These elections are not conducted as are those for other officials. The judge does not run against other candidates, and he does not campaign. He runs only "against himself," and stands upon the record he has made on the bench. The "judicial ballot" contains no political symbols and is made up of but a single question: "Shall Judge . . . of the . . . Court, be retained in office? Yes. No."

The elections are not mere formalities, as one judge who was not returned to the bench found out. The state feels that the arrangement keeps the public interested in the work of the courts, and that it keeps the judges "on their toes," since they serve only so long as their records are good.

Why not make it a class project to find out how judges in your city and state are selected? Talk to people in the courts—judges or clerks, to lawyers, and to other adults to get answers to the following questions:

1. How are our state and local judges selected?
2. How long has our system been in effect?
3. Has there been any general criticism of it, or does the public seem to be satisfied with the method?
4. Are any new plans for selecting judges being considered by the state legislature? If so, what are they?
5. Are any local groups, bar associations or citizens' committees, seeking to change the method of selection? What plans do they suggest?

A fuller discussion of the Missouri plan than given here will be found in the *National Municipal Review* for November 1949. In the *Nation's Business* for January 1950, Vera Connolly discusses the citizen's individual responsibility in the selection of judges. Her article is entitled "Weak Judges Weaken Your Rights."

—By CARRINGTON SHIELDS.

Science News

Jet pilots flying supersonic planes may soon have the benefit of a new safety device in case they have to abandon ship. The U. S. Navy has developed a "breakaway" cockpit, called a "pod," which separates itself from the rest of the plane in an emergency. Riding inside the pod, the pilot may be dropped safely from very high altitudes where the lack of oxygen and extreme cold make an ordinary parachute jump impossible.

When a lever is pulled, the cockpit is blown free of the plane. Two tail fins are released to keep it from tumbling to earth too fast. As speed decreases, a small parachute is automatically released to keep the cockpit level. This in turn releases the main parachute which brings the pod gently to earth.

If the pilot has to land in water, the waterproof cockpit serves as a boat. The parachute can be detached, and a weight is lowered into the water to hold the craft right side up.

The pod, which has been under experimentation for two years, will receive its flight tests this year.

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Plastic roads—built in five hours—have been reported by a scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Particularly well suited to wet, muddy areas, the roads can be built in clay which contains as much as 30 per cent water.

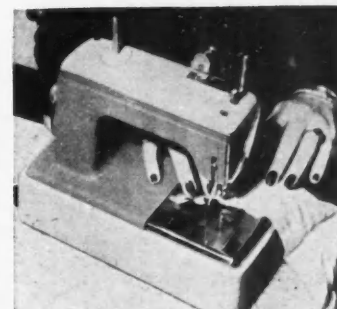
The process consists of soaking the ground with three special chemicals—compounds of calcium and sodium—which act as a binder to mold the soil particles together. The roads will support heavy vehicles, and airstrips may be made in the same manner, the scientist states.

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The most unusual "drugstore" in the country is packing radioisotopes for shipment all over the world. Behind a concrete wall two feet thick, scientists at the Oak Ridge Laboratory in Tennessee are handling radioactive materials by remote control. With long tongs—and the aid of mirrors—they pick up bottles in their stock room, open them, and pour out small amounts of the powerful materials into small containers. They can even screw the tops back on the bottles.

Packages for shipment to other laboratories are carefully wrapped in packing materials, and then the wrappings and all are canned in tin containers so that the isotopes travel safely to their destination.

—By HAZEL L. ELDRIDGE.

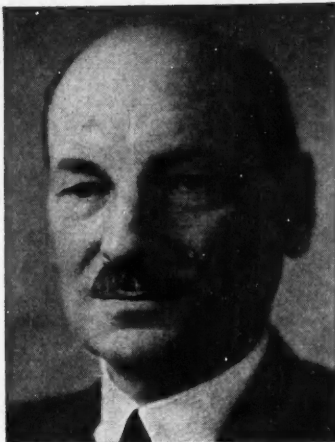


THIS SMALL SEWING MACHINE, at the "Good Design" exhibition in Chicago's Merchandise Mart, weighs only seven pounds, but it can do almost all the jobs big machines perform.

The Story of the Week



WINSTON CHURCHILL (left) is Britain's Conservative Party leader. Prime Minister Clement Attlee leads the Labor Party which won a narrow majority in Parliament as the result of elections last month. The two men differ greatly in their views.



British Leaders

Clement R. Attlee, who is serving his second term as Prime Minister of Great Britain as a result of the recent elections in that country, is a quiet but forceful man. He has served as head of the Labor Party for 15 years, and has been Prime Minister since 1945.

Attlee was born in London in 1883. His family was well-to-do and he went to Oxford. Some time after his graduation, he became interested in the lot of the working man. He joined the Labor Party because he felt that socialism would solve the problems of poverty and unemployment.

During World War II, Attlee served as deputy prime minister and often presided at cabinet meetings when the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was out of the country. Since Attlee became Prime Minister for the first time in the summer of 1945, his plan to nationalize a number of the nation's basic industries has been carried out to a large extent.

The man who would now be the British Prime Minister if the Conservatives had won the recent elections is, of course, Winston Churchill. The latter was born in 1874, the son of a British father and an American mother. Because of his interest in military matters, Churchill went to Sandhurst—Britain's equivalent of West Point—instead of Oxford or Cambridge.

Upon receiving his commission, Churchill served for a time in India and Egypt but then resigned to be a correspondent for a London paper. During the Boer War, he became something of a national hero when he was captured by the Boers and made a daring escape.

Churchill became Prime Minister of Great Britain in May, 1940, at a time when the Nazis had overrun a large part of Europe and seemed invincible. He remained at the head of the government until the Conservative defeat at the polls after the end of the war in Europe.

Treaty with Ireland

The United States and the Republic of Ireland recently took two important steps to improve the already cordial relations between their peoples. One step was the signing by both coun-

tries of a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation. The other was an agreement to elevate the American legation in Dublin and the Irish legation in Washington to the status of embassies.

Under the terms of the treaty, both countries pledge to encourage trade with each other by removing certain restrictions that now hamper the exchange of American and Irish products. They also pledge to grant each other's people certain privileges while residing in their respective areas. Irish citizens working in the U. S., for example, would receive the same social security benefits as are provided American citizens. American businessmen would be allowed to invest in Irish industry in much the same manner as Irish businessmen.

The treaty between the U. S. and Ireland is now being considered by our Senate and the Irish Parliament, both of which must approve it before it can go into effect. Ratification by the Senate is by two-thirds vote.

"Substitute" Capital

Representative Chet Holifield, Democrat, of California, thinks that we should have two national capitals. In the event of another war, Holifield fears that Washington might be attacked by a uranium or hydrogen bomb and that leaders of all three branches of the government might be killed.

He also is afraid that documents bearing on important government problems might be destroyed.

According to a resolution Holifield recently introduced in Congress, a commission would be established to study the advisability of selecting some inland city as a "substitute" capital for Washington. The commission would consider the possible location of such a capital and draw up plans for moving personnel and records out of Washington immediately in case we became involved in another conflict.

"Cheaper by the Dozen"

Twentieth Century-Fox has produced an amusing comedy in "Cheaper by the Dozen," a picture that relates the adventures and foibles of a family in which there are 12 children. The picture is adapted from the book of the same name and is a true story.

The film centers about the father, the mother, and the oldest child, who are played by Clifton Webb, Myrna Loy and Jeanne Crain, respectively. The other 11 children are played by a group of youngsters who all perform their roles competently (including the one who acts as the new-born baby!).

The humor of the story revolves around the grumpiness of the father, who possesses impossibly high standards of conduct and cannot see why his children do not live up to them. Miss Loy, as the mother, is forever trying to make her husband understand but seldom succeeds. Miss Crain, as a young lady of 16, gets the brunt of her father's criticism.

Coal Recovery

The nation is gradually recovering from the coal crisis of recent weeks. Existing supplies are being replaced all over the country as fast as possible.

If the owners and miners had not reached an agreement when they did, there is no doubt that Congress would have quickly passed a law to place the mines under government operation until the dispute was settled. It is fortunate that such action was not necessary, for the government might have had serious difficulty in operating the mines.

Under the new contract that has been agreed upon, the miners will

receive an increase in wages of 70 cents a day, bringing their daily pay to \$14.75. The owners will also increase their contributions to the miners' welfare fund, from which retirement and other benefit payments are made to the miners.

Many people are urging the government to work out some kind of plan or machinery to prevent another coal crisis from developing. We have had one crisis after another for the last 10 years. President Truman, in seeking to prevent future crises, has asked Congress to establish a commission to look into the entire coal problem. Whether this request will lead to any preventive plan remains to be seen.

FEPC Bill

Political observers are wondering whether the Fair Employment Practices bill that was recently adopted by the House will be passed when it comes up for consideration before the Senate. Under the bill's terms, a commission would be set up to investigate cases where people were refused jobs because of their race, religion, color, or national origin, but the agency would have no power to impose penalties for such discrimination.

The measure was adopted by the House as a result of the efforts of a large group of Republicans and northern Democrats, many of whom would have preferred a bill that contained penalties for violations but were content to settle for a measure without such a provision. The bill was opposed by almost all Southern Democratic representatives and some Republicans and Northern Democrats.

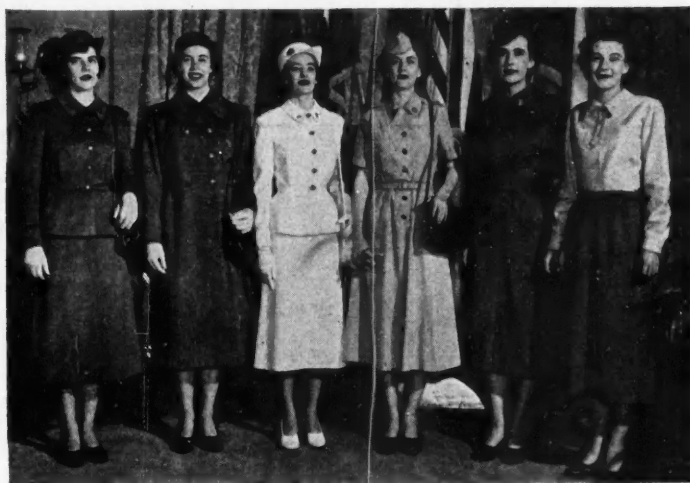
The Southern Democratic representatives objected to the measure because they felt that the problem of discrimination in employment should be handled by the states, not the federal government. Most of the Republican and Northern Democratic opponents of the measure argued that, without any provisions for enforcement of fair employment practices, it was worse than no bill at all.

Proposals for Peace

The foreign ministers of the 12 countries comprising the North Atlantic Security Alliance may meet in the near future to discuss common defense



"CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN" is an uproarious story of a father who is an engineer and the head of a family of 12 children



NEW UNIFORMS for Army service women (left to right): A two-piece wool uniform; overcoat; nurse's white summer dress uniform; summer dress in cotton; field jacket and skirt; summer work uniform. Less costly than older uniforms and more attractive, they will be required dress after January 1951.

problems and to determine how best to check the current spread of communism throughout the world. According to some observers, if such a conference takes place, one of the plans that may be considered is a widely publicized proposal that was recently made by Senator Brien McMahon, Democrat, of Connecticut, and chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy.

Under McMahon's proposal, the North Atlantic powers would draw up a plan for effective international control of both uranium and hydrogen bombs and would then ask the UN General Assembly to consider the scheme at a meeting in Moscow.

If Russia agreed to such a meeting, according to Senator McMahon, there might be a chance that the western democracies could come to terms with the Soviet Union. If Russia refused to allow such a conference to be held on her territory, the whole world would know that the Soviet government was not interested in stopping the armaments race or in averting another world war.

McMahon's recommendation is the second that he has made in recent weeks on the issue of atomic energy. Shortly after President Truman announced that the U. S. would attempt to build the hydrogen bomb, the Democratic lawmaker proposed that we offer to contribute 50 billion dollars over a five-year period to help improve economic conditions throughout the world, including Russia. In return for the aid they would receive, Russia and the other nations would have to agree to genuine international control of atomic energy.

Spring Training

Since the opening of spring drills March 1, all major league baseball clubs have been busy practicing at their respective training camps in Florida, Arizona, and California. They have also been playing exhibition games with one another and with minor league teams.

Many sportswriters are already speculating on the outcome of the pennant races and the world series this year. Some think that St. Louis, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York will each prove tough competition for the Dodgers, last year's National League

pennant winner. In the American League, a strong bid for the pennant is expected to be made by Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Detroit.

Agreement on Niagara

Officials of the United States and Canada are pleased with the 50-year treaty that was recently signed by the American State Department and the Canadian Ministry of External Affairs. Under the agreement, each nation is authorized to increase the amount of water it may divert from the Niagara River to produce electric power for industries and farms. At the same time, enough water will be left so that the spectacle of Niagara Falls will remain as it now is.

The treaty is now before the U. S. Senate and the Canadian Parliament, both of which must approve its terms before it can go into effect. It would supplant the existing agreement regarding the Niagara and the Falls, under which we and the Canadians may use only a limited amount of the river's water for power purposes.

—By DAVID BEILES.

THE LIGHTER SIDE

"If my boss doesn't take back what he said this morning I'm going to leave this office."

"What did he say?"

"Told me to find another job."

★

"Was your garden a success last year?"

"It certainly was. My neighbor's chickens won first prize at the poultry show."

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Young Doctor: "Well, Dad, now that it's time to hang out my shingle, do you have some good advice for me?"

Father M.D.: "Yes. Always write your prescriptions illegibly and your bills plainly."

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Doctor: "You have only your strong constitution to thank for your recovery."

Patient: "Remember that, Doc, when you send the bill."

"There's a man outside to collect a bill you owe him."

"What does he look like?"

"He looks like you'd better pay him right away."

★

Absent-minded Professor (meeting his son): "Hello, George. How's your father?"



FOREST SERVICE, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
"Please don't go to any bother—we can't stay for dinner."

Federalism Debate

Discussion of World Government Which Appeared in The American Observer Last Week Is Continued

LAST week we carried an article on "World Federation." We described the plans for federation which are being debated in Congress. We outlined in part the arguments pro and con. This week we shall continue the debate, hearing first from the advocates of a global government:

"The United States would not need to worry about its power in a world parliament. Size and population alone would not decide a nation's representation. Other factors—educational standards, industrial development, and length of experience in democratic government—would be considered. On the basis of these factors, the United States would be strongly represented in such a parliament, and would be able to have great influence over its actions. Moreover, we would be certain to have the support of Britain, Canada, Australia, and many other countries in most controversies which would arise.

"World government offers the only real hope of preserving peace and modern civilization. So long as individual nations engage in competition and rivalry over trade, over oil and other natural resources, and over territory—so long as each country tries to become more powerful than its neighbors—there can be no prospect of lasting peace. Only when nations cooperate in a single government will they stop fighting to the death. Only then will they adopt the 'we feeling' and work as a unit in the common struggle to achieve lasting peace and continuing progress.

"We in this country see how difficult it is to deal with Russia in the United Nations when she clings to her so-called 'sovereign rights' and when she engages in nationalistic imperialism. Only by bringing her into a true world government can we ever expect to get along with her.

"By forming a world government,

the billions upon billions of dollars now being spent on armaments could be used for raising standards of living throughout the globe. Immediate steps could be taken to improve the conditions of huge numbers of underfed, poorly clothed, badly housed, and underprivileged peoples."

Now let us hear from the other side in this controversy:

"Whatever plan might be worked out for deciding how many representatives each nation should have in a world legislature, the United States could not possibly have as many seats in such a body as all the other nations of the world combined. Our country would be in a definite minority. Consequently, the world parliament might vote in favor of costly world relief projects, and make us pay the giant share of the cost because of our wealth. It might decide to send many millions of people from India, China, and other overpopulated lands to America. We could be hurt in countless ways.

"Neither today nor any other time should the United States lose its identity and become a part of a world organization or government whose member nations have surrendered their sovereignty. We in this country have made unprecedented progress along the road of freedom and prosperity. We should never throw aside what has taken years of hard work and sacrifice to achieve. We should never turn our destiny over to other peoples or nations. American democracy and freedom must be forever maintained.

"For us to join a world government in the effort to maintain peace would be like burning down the barn in the attempt to get roast pig. We would destroy our independence, and yet we would have no assurance whatever of getting 'roast pig' in the form of peace. A world government would create many more problems and bitter disputes than we have today with our system of sovereign nations.

"If nations really want peace, they can have it by the simple and direct method of disarming. This plan could not be safely adopted, of course, unless all the large nations participated. If they won't agree to do that, they would never agree to work together in a world organization. An effective world disarmament program is the goal toward which we should strive, not the impractical and hopeless vision of an all-powerful world government."

The debates on world federalism are frequently carried on in a spirit of hot contention. People feel very deeply on the problems involved. The problem is one that merits our best thought and consideration.

According to the Rand McNally-Cosmopolitan World Atlas, both the highest and lowest points on the earth's surfaces are located in Asia. The highest point is Mount Everest on the border between China and Nepal. It is 29,141 feet high. The lowest point on the earth's surface is found on the shores of the Dead Sea in Palestine—1,292 feet below sea level.

New British Parliament

(Concluded from page 1)

The new British Parliament is faced with no "gunpowder plot," but it is confronted with a situation which many people, both in Britain and the U.S.A., find highly disturbing. As a result of last month's elections, the two major political parties in Great Britain have almost equal strength in the House of Commons. With one party practically balancing the other, the future of the present government is uncertain.

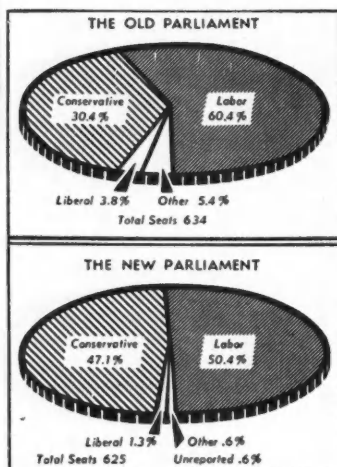
Actually the Labor Party, which has ruled Britain since 1945, continues to have a slight advantage. In the House of Commons, Laborites hold 315 seats, while Conservatives hold 296. Minor parties hold about 12. (One seat where a special election is required is still not filled as these words are written.) Consequently, the Labor Party under Prime Minister Clement Attlee continues to control the government, but it holds the smallest majority given any ruling group in Britain in many years.

Parliamentary Rule

To understand the difficulties which the present situation presents, let us briefly review the workings of the parliamentary type of government:

The Prime Minister, or head of the government, is not chosen directly by the people. The voters elect members of the House of Commons. Then the leader of the strongest party in the House of Commons becomes Prime Minister.

On any question that comes up for a vote, the Prime Minister must have the backing of a majority of the House of Commons. If a majority of the members fail to support him, he resigns. If he thinks, however, that people are on his side, he can have the House of Commons dissolved and call for a new election right away.



PARLIAMENT'S lineup, according to parties, before and after the recent election. (Percentages have changed slightly, because of new returns, since the lower chart was made.)

Unless the party in power has a majority of at least 30 or 40 over its combined opposition, its grip on the government is generally very shaky. If the majority is less than that, a small group rebelling from party leadership may bring about an upset of the group in power by withdrawing its support on a particular issue.

Thus it is that many observers feel that the present British Labor government may be upset and may be forced to call for new elections in the

near future. If, for example, Labor members should disagree among themselves on the speed with which the government should carry out the nationalization of the steel industry, some disgruntled members might withdraw their support from Prime Minister Attlee and thus force new elections.

In this eventuality, each party would have to wage another campaign on much the same scale as the one which ended last month. What the results of another election would be it is impossible to say. One party might be given a large enough majority this time to form a stable government. On the other hand, another stalemate could result.

Of course, the present Labor government may not be faced with this problem for some time. It may be able to keep itself firmly in power. To do so, though, will require that the party keep a tight hold on its members to see that they support the Labor position on every issue that comes up.

In order to keep its members in line, the Labor leaders would very likely postpone voting on matters that were at all controversial. Under such circumstances, Labor might be able to stay in power indefinitely, but it would not be able to carry out the program in which it believes.

Another possibility that was voiced by some when the election results became known was that the Labor and Conservative Parties might decide to join together in a coalition-type government. Under such a set-up, the two major parties would work together and share responsibility. A coalition government ruled England during the war.

Even though a coalition worked satisfactorily in World War II, neither party seems inclined to cooperate on such a basis at this time. If such a government were established, each party would have to compromise on its program.

The present situation may mean delays and postponements on various important decisions, some of which affect Great Britain's relations with the U.S.A. For example, in recent months the United States has been trying to get Britain to cooperate more closely with the other nations of western Europe on trade matters. Such cooperation is necessary at once, U.S. leaders feel, if the European Recovery Program is to succeed. Now it is feared that the stalemate created by the elections will delay important decisions on this and other matters.

These are some of the opinions that are being put forth concerning the future of the British government in the months immediately ahead. At the same time, controversy still rages about the meaning of the election results.

The Labor Party, which lost almost 80 seats in the House of Commons, based its campaign on its record of the past 4½ years. Since it came into power in 1945, it has brought about profound changes in the life of the British people.

Among other things, the Labor government has taken over ownership and control of some of the nation's most important industries, including the coal mines, the electric-power plants, and the railroads. It has made plans for taking over the iron and steel in-



CASTING A BALLOT in Britain's parliamentary elections. Because the Labor Party's majority is so small, a new election may be necessary in the near future.

dustry. It has also carried out extensive social security measures, including the establishment of a nationwide system of health care at government expense.

The Conservatives, who gained more than 80 seats in the election, promised in their campaign to reduce taxes and controls. They strongly opposed further nationalization of industry, including the steel mills. The Conservative Party pledged to continue the present social security program, including health insurance, but promised to run it more efficiently and economically than the Labor Party had done.

About a week before the election, Winston Churchill, Conservative Party leader, came out in favor of a talk with Russian leaders on atomic control. Claiming that Mr. Churchill's suggestion was an "election stunt" to win votes rather than a serious proposal, Labor leaders refused to debate the issue.

What effect—if any—Mr. Churchill's statement had on the outcome of the election is impossible to say. Aside from this matter, foreign policy did not enter into the campaign. Both Laborites and Conservatives continue to favor firm cooperation with the U.S.A. and other western democracies.

The outcome of the balloting indicated—many observers felt—that the Conservative Party's promises to eliminate controls and reduce taxes had a strong appeal. The Conservatives polled a total of 2½ million more votes than they received in 1945.

Welfare Program

At the same time, it was generally agreed that Labor demonstrated that it still has strong support for its welfare program (which, as we have seen, was approved in principle by the Conservatives). Even though the Labor Party lost close to 80 seats, it still received more than 1 million votes in excess of its 1945 total.

In fact, one of the most striking features of the election was the extremely large turn-out of voters at the polls. About 85 per cent of Britain's registered voters actually cast their ballots. In the U.S. election of 1948, only 49 per cent of qualified voters exercised their right of suffrage.

The outcome of the British elections has brought varied reactions in the U.S.A. Many Republicans, who think that President Truman's "Fair Deal" program resembles the social welfare program of the British Labor Party, hail the Conservative gains. Many

Republicans predict that the trend shown in the British voting will be duplicated in U.S. congressional elections next fall and will result in Republican victories. Americans as well as British, it is argued, are fed up with ever-increasing government activity.

Most Democrats, on the other hand, say the election proves that the British people still want the welfare programs put into effect by the Labor Party. But many Englishmen, according to this point of view, feel that their government is taking over too many industries and is regulating the lives of the people too closely. Since the Democratic Party does not favor nationalization of industries, it is argued, a comparison between it and the Labor Party is meaningless.

While American political leaders argue over these issues, the majority of them are in agreement on one point; namely, that the British election effectively answers a criticism which has been made of our type of government as compared to the English. This criticism was heard particularly in 1946 after the American people elected a Republican Congress. Since there was already a Democratic President in office, a stalemate resulted. Few important laws were passed during the next two years.

At the time, the comment was frequently made that a type of government which would permit the legislature to be controlled by one party at the same time the Presidency was controlled by another should be replaced by the parliamentary system which is in operation in Britain and certain other democratic countries. As we have pointed out, the Prime Minister of Britain (who is equivalent to our President) cannot hold office unless he has the support of the majority in Parliament. This is known as the parliamentary system.

The latest election in Britain has shown, however, that when two parties have almost equal strength in England, the same kind of a stalemate can exist in that government that sometimes does in ours. The fact is, it doesn't seem to make much difference which system of democratic government a country has—the parliamentary type or the U.S. system—so long as there are two major political parties which are fairly evenly divided. No matter which system is in effect, it isn't likely that much important legislation will be passed until the stalemate has been ended.

Readers Say—

The January 2 issue of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER contained an article about the Amanans, a religious group that left Germany nearly a hundred years ago and set up a communist colony in east-central Iowa. Having lived only 50 miles from this settlement at one time, I thought you might like to know a little more about its history and its problems.

The Amanans really established five colonies when they migrated to America: the north, east, south, west and central "Amanas." The total area of the settlements was about 26,000 acres. All the land, mills, and other enterprises were owned by everybody in common.

The principles that guided the Amanans were those of "The Community of True Inspiration," a church which the colonists founded in protest against the state church of Germany. The church stressed devotion to religious ideals and avoidance of all outside influences.

The deliberate isolation of the Amanans was broken in the 1900's, when modern means of communications spread throughout the country. In 1932, as your story mentioned, the group discarded communism for a capitalist society.

Today, the Amanans' settlements constitute a thriving manufacturing center. A plant has been built for the production of home freezers and washers and there are several woolen mills. Central Amana has several successful dairies.

In my opinion, the Amanans' experience shows that no community can live in isolation or along communistic lines.

WANDA MARIE PHELPS,
Prescott, Arizona

★ ★ ★

We are doing a good deal these days to help other people overcome their poverty and build up a decent economy. But what are we doing to help the poor people of the United States? There are many sections in this country where people lack food and decent housing.

It seems to me that we would make a much better impression than we do on foreign countries if we improved conditions in our own land before giving money to others.

LEILA WEIGEL,
Linden, Wisconsin

★ ★ ★

I think that the Wright brothers should have won first place in the recent polls on the most outstanding personalities of the first half of the 20th century. The engine-driven airplane, which the Wright brothers invented, has really revolutionized the world. It has bound countries more closely together and opened up vast



new possibilities in industry and transportation. It has also changed the method of conducting war, since aircraft can now deliver such weapons as the atom bomb to almost any target in the world.

JON GROSSMAN,
West Lawn, Pennsylvania

★ ★ ★

I disagree with Mary Delaney, who wrote that "big business has neither harmed its smaller competitors nor prevented them from growing."

I know of cases where big business did indeed harm small companies and where many of the latter were forced to close down. In my opinion, our larger corporations must be made to abide by our anti-trust laws. If they do not do so, they will have a bad effect on our entire economy.

ALAN H. McMANEMON,
Lisbon Falls, Maine



Yadana Nat Mai



Richard Htun Nyunt

Visitors from Burma

They Describe What Japanese Occupation Meant to Their Land.
It Was Once a British Colony, but Is Now Free.

YADANA Nat Mai, a lovely 17-year-old Burmese girl, and Richard Htun Nyunt, 16, know about the horrors of the war with Japan from first-hand experience. They took time to tell us about some of the hardships, during their recent visit to our country to see our schools and to study how we live.

"The Christmas of 1941 brought trouble and destruction to Burma," Yadana said in an interview with THE AMERICAN OBSERVER. "The Japanese bombed the city of Rangoon, my home, for the first time on December 23. I was unlucky enough to fall a victim to the shrapnel and bullets. I received nine wounds in all, one for each of my nine years. For me, it was a miraculous escape, for the lady and gentleman with whom I was sitting were killed."

Yadana, on a stretcher, and her family were moved from Burma to the interior of the country as the Japanese advanced. By April 1942, it was necessary for them to flee by air to India. It was not until the fall of 1946 that Yadana could return to her homeland.

Richard, in contrast, had to remain in Burma and endure a good part of the Japanese occupation. His father took him out of school in 1941. Later, however, the Japanese made attendance compulsory. Richard and all students in Burma had to study the Japanese language.

"By 1945 the situation was going from bad to worse," he recalled. "Planes were bombing us daily, rice could not be grown in the mountains where we were, rice from the plains was not arriving, and people were starving. The Japanese began to be cruel."

Richard's father decided then upon flight to the village of Hsipaw, toward the frontier with China. There, too, the family had many months of hardship—until the tides of war turned against Japan, and American and Chinese troops made their way to the village hideout.

"Our house was used as a base office by the American and Chinese commanders," Richard said. "Dad helped in every way and he was much relieved to know that the shadow had been lifted."

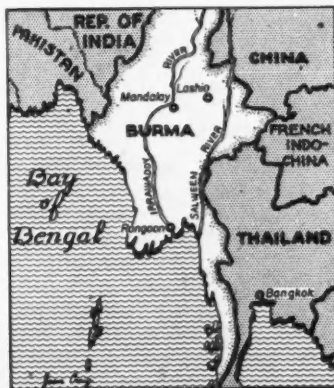
Richard and Yadana, whose name means "June rose," are classmates in a Maymyo high school, in northern Burma. Both were delighted with their visit to the United States, and with the many things they saw.

They disagreed about us principally on one point. Richard thought that our great mass production of goods was a fine thing. But Yadana was critical. She felt that our mass production is too much of a pattern, that we do everything the same way without originality.

The two were agreed that our standard of living is high; that our labor-saving devices free young people and adults from much work; that our schools are excellent; our libraries very fine; our roads, trains, planes, and other means of transport are unexcelled.

BURMA, with 261,749 square miles, is slightly smaller than Texas and has a population of over 18 million. Rangoon, with over a half million people, is the capital and the largest city. Long a colony of England, Burma was granted independence and became a republic in 1948.

Agriculture is the principal occupation, with rice an important export item. Silk weaving and oil refining are important industries. Serious efforts are being made to modernize agriculture and industry, so that the standard of living can be raised.



BURMA, a neighbor of India

Study Guide

Party Views

1. What issue split the Democrats into two opposing camps during the 1948 Presidential election?
2. List at least four parts of President Truman's "Fair Deal" program.
3. What outstanding Democrat is extremely critical of this program? Briefly give his point of view.
4. Were the "liberals" or the "conservatives" within the Republican Party most influential in drawing up the party's platform for the 1950 congressional elections?
5. Discuss the policy Thomas Dewey thinks the Republicans should follow.
6. On what points do members of both political parties agree in reference to our foreign policy?
7. When do the opposing groups within each party usually close ranks and work together?

Discussion

Do you or do you not think it would be a good idea for all Democrats and Republicans who favor a less active federal government to work together in one party, and for all Democrats and Republicans who support President Truman's ideas to work together in another? Give reasons for your answer.

British Parliament

1. Under what circumstances in the parliamentary type of government does the Prime Minister resign?
2. Why do many observers feel that the present British Labor government may be forced to call for new elections in the near future?
3. If the Labor government is to remain in power, what steps may it have to take regarding matters that are controversial?
4. How may the situation in Parliament affect Britain's part in the European Recovery Program?
5. Briefly outline the campaign promises of the Labor and Conservative Parties.
6. How did the British election effectively answer a criticism which has been made of the U.S. system of government?

Discussion

1. Do you think the British Labor Party should call for new elections as soon as possible? Why, or why not?
2. If you lived in England, which party do you think you would support? Give your reasons.

Miscellaneous

1. What are two provisions of the treaty we recently signed with Ireland?
2. Briefly describe the backgrounds of Attlee and Churchill.
3. What do you think would be the advantages and disadvantages of having a "substitute" capital for the U. S.?
4. What, in general, are the terms of the FEPC bill passed by the U. S. House of Representatives?
5. What is Senator McMahon's latest proposal for peace?
6. Which national legislature is considered to be "the mother of parliaments"?
7. Discuss the method by which Missouri selects its judges? What is your opinion of this method?

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Pronunciations

Hsipaw—see-paw
Maymyo—mā-myō (y as in yes)
Witenagemot—wit'-e-nah-gē-mōt

Career for Tomorrow

In the Building Trades

THE building trades offer good opportunities for young men who like to combine mental activity with hard physical labor. This field includes carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters, plasterers, bricklayers, and others who assist in the construction of homes and larger buildings. The duties of these workers are similar in that they require some use of independent judgment, a thorough knowledge of one's particular field, and a strong back and capable hands.

The fields differ greatly, of course, in the specific tasks they involve. The carpenter works almost entirely in putting up the wooden parts of a building. The electrician fits the electric wiring and fixtures into place. The plumber sees that water pipes are properly installed. And the plasterer and painter finish the walls. The particular trade a young man enters will depend upon his individual interests and abilities.

May Start as Helper

A person going into any one of these fields may start as a helper. By working with experienced men over a long period of years he will learn the fundamentals of the trade and will eventually be qualified to take a job requiring a skilled craftsman.

An apprenticeship, however, offers a better approach if one is to become a journeyman—or highly skilled worker. Labor unions and employers together arrange the apprentice program, which includes on-the-job training and classroom study. In the practical part of the program, a young man works side-by-side with journeymen. He assists them when he can, receives instruction from them, and learns by observing their methods. He also does a good deal of the actual work himself, beginning with simple tasks and progressing to more advanced ones.

In the classroom, an apprentice studies scientific subjects—mathematics, physics, chemistry, and so on—related to his field. He also learns mechanical drawing and he acquires skill in reading blueprints. Sometimes he is taught the history of his trade and economic principles that govern it. The local laws and regulations applying to his work are also a part of the course of study.

The apprenticeship is controlled by

a contract signed by union representatives, the employer, and the apprentice. Such points as wages, conditions of employment, and the course of training to be followed are included in the agreement. To qualify for apprenticeship training a young man must usually be between 18 and 25 years of age.

In most building trades, a person who has completed his apprenticeship must take a state examination before he can be licensed to do skilled jobs.

Wages in these trades vary in different localities, but they are generally good. An apprentice starts at about \$25 a week and receives periodic increases throughout his training. A journeyman may earn from \$1.50 to \$2.50 an hour—from \$3,000 to \$5,000 a year, if he is employed full time. In "boom" times wages may be higher.

One of the chief disadvantages of a career in this field is that a person cannot count on being continuously employed. In some sections of the country, construction comes to a halt during the winter months. And building is usually curtailed during periods of general business depression.

There are numerous opportunities for advancement in this kind of work. A skilled journeyman may become a foreman and have charge of one section of a job. He may then go on to become a superintendent and oversee all operations connected with a large project. As a further step up the ladder, he may establish himself as an independent contractor and arrange for carrying out all the different jobs required in the construction of a building.

Thorough Knowledge

Advancement depends upon a person's having a thorough knowledge not only of his own particular field, but also of other branches of the building trades. It depends, too, on his being able to plan large jobs and to handle groups of men successfully.

A discussion, "The National Apprenticeship Program," on apprenticeships in general can be secured from the Bureau of Apprenticeship, Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. The best information on opportunities in each community can be secured from local offices of the labor unions and of the United States Employment Service.



DEMOCRACY advanced when King John signed the Magna Carta in 1215

Historical Backgrounds

Parliamentary Government

THE British Parliament, now meeting in London, claims to be the *Mother of Parliaments* for all the world. Its origin dates back over a thousand years to ancient tribal councils. Its methods of procedure have influenced every democratic legislature, including our own.

Our Declaration of Independence and Constitution contain statements on representative government and the right of free speech that can be traced, in large degree, to precedents established by the British Parliament. Our third President, Thomas Jefferson, wrote a guide for conducting Congress and based it on the rules of Parliament. The French assembly, similarly, has adapted many of the British Parliament's regulations to its own uses, as have other nations.

The *witenagemot*, or "assembly of wise men," was the first real national council for England. Under King Edgar in the 900's, this council advised the monarch on the appointment and removal of officials, and on the making of treaties. It also acted as a supreme court. Members of this assembly were men acceptable to the king. However, the ordinary people sometimes were permitted to come to the meetings and make known their wishes. The assembly was, then, a very early step toward legislative government.

The *Magna Carta*, or Great Charter, a tremendous forward step toward constitutional government in England, was forced upon King John in 1215. The charter established the right of an accused person to a fair trial. Won by discontented barons and knights, it also forbade the collection of taxes without their consent. But, while the charter protected the barons from arbitrary taxes, it left them free to tax the tenants and serfs on their great estates.

Representation for all the people developed very slowly, as a long series of kings gradually summoned more and more representatives from councils and districts for council meetings

to assess taxes. These popular representatives, however, were subject to wishes of the king. Truly representative government finally emerged in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, although women did not win the right to take part in the election of officials until after World War I.

The British usually refer to 1295 as the year of the *model parliament*, the one which established a clear pattern for development of a true government of the people. Called the "commons," it was summoned by Edward I. He directed that two knights from each county, two citizens from each city, and two from each town be elected as representatives to the council.

Lords Were Powerful

The Lords, or the nobility, were the most powerful group in the "commons" for many years. Gradually, however, the people built up their power to exceed that of the Lords—most of whom sit in the legislature by reason of their noble titles. Today, the Lords can delay legislation up to two years in some cases, but they have no real power to veto it permanently or to pass laws. Their influence is felt mainly as they *advise* on legislation.

Parliament met as one house, at first. Edward III permitted the establishment of two houses, the *Commons* and the *Lords*, about the middle of the fourteenth century. Thus the framework of the Parliament, as we know it today, has existed over 600 years.

Kings tried frequently to assert their power and check representative, democratic rule. But, by a *bill of rights* in 1689, the British Parliament established the principle that it was superior to the kings. From that time on the tradition grew that kings "reign but do not rule." Today, in democratic Britain, the king is looked upon only as a symbol of the unity of the British peoples. Power is reserved for Parliament.

—By THOMAS F. HAWKINS.



THE BUILDING TRADES are busy now constructing houses and new office buildings